

MULTICULTURAL COUNSELING COMPETENCIES

Based on competencies developed by the Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD)

Awareness of our own Assumptions, Values, and Biases

Awareness Competencies

1. Move from being culturally unaware to aware of own cultural heritage; value and respect cultural differences
2. Awareness of how own cultural background, experiences, attitudes, values and biases influence psychological processes
3. Ability to recognize limits of competence and expertise
4. Comfort with racial, ethnic, cultural and belief differences between self and others

Knowledge Competencies

5. Knowledge of own racial and cultural heritage and the personal and professional effects on definitions of normality-abnormality
6. Knowledge and understanding of how oppression, racism, discrimination, and stereotyping affect self personally and professionally
7. Knowledge of social impact on others, i.e. how communication style differences inhibit or facilitate the counseling process and how to anticipate possible impacts

Skill Competencies

8. Seek educational, consultative, and training experiences to enrich understanding and effectiveness in working with culturally different populations
9. Seek to understand self as racial and cultural beings, actively seeking a non-racist identity

Understanding the Worldview of Culturally Different People

Awareness Competencies

10. Awareness of negative emotional reactions toward other groups
11. Awareness of stereotypes and preconceived notions toward other groups

Knowledge Competencies

12. Knowledge and information of life experiences, cultural heritage, and historical background of the particular group that they are serving
13. Knowledge of how race, culture and ethnicity affect personality formation, vocational choices, manifestation of psychological disorders, help-seeking behavior, and the appropriateness or inappropriateness of counseling approaches
14. Knowledge of sociopolitical influences that impinge upon the life of racial and ethnic minorities

Skill Competencies

15. Familiarize self with relevant and recent research regarding mental health/ mental health disorders of ethnic and racial groups
16. Become actively involved with culturally different individuals outside the counseling setting



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Developing Appropriate Intervention Strategies and Techniques

Awareness Competencies

17. Respect for religious and/or spiritual beliefs about physical and mental functioning
18. Respect indigenous helping practices and intrinsic help-giving networks
19. Value bilingualism and do not view another language as an impediment to counseling

Knowledge Competencies

20. Knowledge of how generic characteristics of counseling (ethnocentric, class bound, and monolingual) clash with some cultural values
21. Knowledge of institutional barriers that prevent people from using mental health services
22. Knowledge of potential biases in assessment instruments
23. Knowledge of family structures, hierarchies, values and beliefs; community characteristics, and community and family resources
24. Knowledge of relevant discriminatory practices at the social and community levels

Skill Competencies

25. Engage in a variety of verbal and nonverbal helping resources
26. Exercise institutional intervention skills on behalf of the person
27. Seek consultation with traditional healers and religious or spiritual leaders
28. Take responsibility for interacting in the language requested by the person or make referral if needed
29. Have training and expertise in traditional assessment and testing instruments, and are aware of their cultural limitations
30. Work to eliminate biases, prejudices, and discriminatory practices
31. Educate about psychological interventions such as goals, expectations, legal rights and the counselor's orientation

